

Robert Hodge Esq.
from his affectionate friend
The Author

FUNERAL ORATION,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON,

DELIVERED ON THE FIRST OF JANUARY, 1800.

IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

NEW-ROCHELLE,

IN THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

By SAMUEL BAYARD, Esq.

NEW-BRUNSWICK:

PRINTED BY ABRAHAM BLAUVELT,

1800.

AT a meeting of the Minister, Wardens and
Vestry of Trinity church, at New-Rochelle,
on the 6th day of January, 1800.

Resolved,

That the thanks of this board
be given to SAMUEL BAYARD, Esq. for his
excellent ORATION, delivered on the first
instant, upon the melancholy occasion of the
much lamented death of our beloved WASH-
INGTON; and that a copy thereof be re-
quested for publication.

FREDERICK GUION, Clerk.



AN ORATION.

FRIENDS *and* FELLOW CITIZENS!

NOT to mourn with a mourning country---not to mingle our tears with those of the American people on the present melancholy occasion, would argue a reproachful want of social sympathy. And not in some *public* manner to express the regrets we feel at the irreparable loss our country has just sustained, would be an impeachment of our sensibility as men, and of our patriotism as citizens.

Through the channel of our public prints, we learn that our country mourns the departure of her first and favourite son. On this occasion "the mourners" emphatically "go about the streets," and the traces of "grief unfeigned" are beheld in the public countenance. On the arms of every class of our fellow citizens we see the emblems of that sorrow which their bosoms feel. Our national council stand forward in the first rank of mourners; every public body through the union follows in the sad procession. Our churches

are clad in black. Their tolling bells in unison with the public sentiment, add solemnity to the scene, and deepen the gloom that beclouds the public mind. Our army---our navy---every political circle---every religious denomination---how divided soever in their sentiments on other topics, all unite in deploring the loss of the most universally beloved and respected character, which this, or any country on earth; which this, or any prior age has ever produced.

YES my friends, the sighs and tears of our afflicted country, on every side proclaim, that WASHINGTON is dead! As if an angel from heaven had announced it, the melancholy intelligence is every where heard with sorrow and dismay. We ask ourselves if it be possible, that one so eminent for talents, so ennobled by his virtues, so rich in the esteem and affection of his country, is indeed no more. Alas! the event is but too certain. WASHINGTON, the hero, the sage, the friend of liberty, and the father of his country, is now sleeping in his grave. Never more shall his majestic form be seen at the head of our armies; never more shall his enlivening voice be heard in the hall of our national senate; his wisdom

and experience shall no longer direct our councils, nor his presence again call forth the enthusiastic admiration of his country.

MUTE is that tongue, whose accents were never heard but with attention and respect ; and lifeless that form which once attracted the gaze of thousands. Low it lies beneath the " clods of the valley," never to rise again, till the trump of the great Arch-Angel shall wake it from the dead.

YET, could talents the best employed, or virtues the most sublime ; could the prayers of surrounding friends, or the influence of medical skill ; could the wishes, or supplications of an affectionate and grateful country have suspended the immutable decree of heaven, his life would have been immortal as his fame. But no, his work was finished---his tour of earthly duty closed---and that awful moment had arrived when his manly frame must " return to the dust as it was," and his enlightened " spirit to the God who gave it."

THE removal of such a character from a state of trial, to a state of rest, is an event calculated to inspire every reflecting mind with pious awe. It is calculated to

awaken those sentiments of esteem and veneration which we have been accustomed to cherish for the ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD ; and it calls upon every citizen who honors merit, or who loves his country, to pay the tribute of a tear, to the memory of the boast and ornament of the present age.

YET what can we do, or what can we say, that can add to the lustre of *his* fame. As well might we by the aid of a taper endeavour to add splendour to yonder sun, as to increase *his* reputation by *our* praise. His *own* actions, and his *own* sentiments, recited with that simplicity which characterised his style of writing and of speaking, will ever constitute his highest eulogium.

STILL, however his merits may transcend our praise, we can express our admiration of his character, and our gratitude for his services ; and although we have neither wealth nor power to raise a mausoleum to his memory, we can embalm his virtues with our tears, and raise a monument to his glory, in the affections of our hearts.

So many are the splendid and good actions of his life ; so numerous and impressive the maxims of sound and libe-

ral policy delivered to his country, since she first assumed a place among the nations of the world, that merely to recite them, would fill a volume. Be this the historian's duty ; and be it ours at present simply to point out a few of those estimable tracts of character, and of those eminent services which have raised our WASHINGTON's, above every Grecian and Roman name ; above every name that stands on the records of modern history.

THERE are two characters in which he has appeared most familiar to our minds ; as a hero, and a sage ; as our GENERAL in war, and our PRESIDENT in peace ; in each of these characters, requiring qualifications so different, let us for a moment contemplate this unequalled man. In both we shall find him exhibiting those high endowments of mind, and those excellent qualities of heart, which have rendered him an honor to his country, and a blessing to the world.

"In war" says an author* (now second in point of rank in the federal government) "In war we have produced a WASHINGTON, whose memory will be adored while liberty shall have votaries ;

* Mr. Jefferson.

whose name will triumph over time, and will in future ages assume its just station among the celebrated worthies of the world; when that wretched philosophy shall be forgotten, that would arrange him among the degeneracies of nature."

ALTHOUGH not educated a soldier; although unskilled in military tactics, and unpractised in the European system of war; we behold him at the voice of his country, (expressed by the unanimous vote of its delegates in congress) assuming the chief command of an army, raised in defence of the rights, and to prevent the subjugation, of these States.

HE undertook this important and hazardous charge, not for the sake of personal emolument. With a generosity as disinterested as it was unexampled, when he first accepted the appointment, he expressly declined receiving any compensation for his services. From this resolution he never departed. Whatever increase of fortune others may have derived from the American revolution; whatever rewards other generals may have received from the gratitude of their country, the COMMANDER IN CHIEF declined every compensation offered for his unparalleled ser-

vices. He wished for no reward, save the approving voice of his own conscience and of his fellow citizens. Nor was honor more than emolument his aim, in accepting this appointment. What honor could he expect to derive from commanding a body of undisciplined militia---a hasty association of citizens; who, whatever might be their enthusiasm for liberty, or their native bravery, must prove unequal opponents to men who had been trained to arms; to veteran soldiers whose profession was war, and whom discipline had rendered obedient as machines.

No, the great ruling principle of his life, was love to his country, zeal for her interest and welfare, founded on rules of eternal justice. It was this sublime principle which supported him amidst the trials, the dangers and fatigues which he had to encounter during the three first years of the American contest. It was from a conviction that his governing motive was the public good, that the American people, notwithstanding their early disasters, never lost their confidence in him. They were satisfied of his talents, and they were still more assured of his zeal and sincerity in the cause he had

espoused. What other character beside himself could have kept together the shattered remains of our army at the close of the unfortunate campaign of '76? Had he through fear for his person or his property; through levity, disgust, or despondence, then abandoned the cause of liberty, who afterwards could have rallied the broken, dispirited remains of our federal army? who could have roused a sufficient spirit in the country to oppose any effectual resistance to the victorious troops of Britain? This was a period of trial; and at this period the firmness, the intrepidity, the patience and heroism of our **COMMANDER IN CHIEF**, like the beams of a bright and cheering star, suddenly bursting from beneath a thick cloud in a stormy night, shone forth to the astonishment and joy of United America. From the lowest state of depression, the public mind was now elevated to hope, and encouraged to perseverance.

THE eventful campaign of '77, though attended with some disasters, terminated advantageously to the American cause. The capture of one entire British army, and the resolute resistance opposed to another, ensured us at the commencement of the campaign of '78, the effectual aid of

France. An aid, prompted by whatever motive---whether by that of reducing the power of an ancient rival, of aggrandizing herself, or of revenging former losses and defeats, was nevertheless of incalculable importance in the establishment of American independence. From this time our affairs brightened till the glorious campaign of '81, which ended with the capture of a second British army, under the command of one of the most able and enterprising generals that Britain could boast. This decisive event satisfied the English government that the subjugation of America was impracticable, and led to the final acknowledgment of American Independence.

THE close of war, and the return of peace, so pleasing to all, was peculiarly grateful to the heart of our *excellent* WASHINGTON. He loved retirement. He had left it with regret, wholly from a sense of duty, and not from a wish for change. With pleasure he anticipated the moment when he should again lose the Commander of an army in the private citizen. That moment had now arrived. His services as a general are no longer necessary. His army is about to be disbanded. He is about to be separated (possibly for

ever) from the companions of his cares and dangers, from men who for eight years had shared his perils and anxieties, and who had been witnesses of his wisdom and his valour. But at this closing scene of the drama, he is not permitted to sheathe the sword and return to his loved retreat, without performing a memorable service to his country---a service in which his personal agency, his zealous and well timed exertions, prevented a great national evil ; prevented his army from tarnishing the laurels he had acquired through a long and glorious war, and instead of *defenders*, becoming the *despoilers* of their country.

THE pay of this army was greatly in arrear. They had received already much of what was due to them in a depreciated paper currency. In discharge of what their country still owed, the same currency and remote, unsettled lands were to form the materials of their compensation. They were about to return to the pursuits of civil life, with only the shadow of reward, for years of danger and of toil ; for health impaired, and the prime of life devoted to the public service. They expected *more* of their country. Their country regretted that their exhausted resources

then enabled them to do no more. The army urged by the artful insinuations of an anonymous writer, were on the point of rising, while yet embodied, and of wresting from their country by force, that compensation which they had in vain demanded of its justice. Never did zeal for the welfare of his country, and the honor of his army, blaze forth with greater splendor even in the actions of a WASHINGTON, than on this occasion. By private influence; by public persuasion; by an appeal to the honor of soldiers, and the patriotism of citizens; by the regard they owed to their personal character, and their country's good; by every motive that could influence a generous mind, he conjured them to disband in peace, and to expect from the justice and gratitude of their country, what they were instigated to extort by violence. His influence was triumphant. He succeeded in preserving the honor of his army and his country from an unnatural civil war.

THIS great object accomplished, we see the American HERO resigning the chief command of the army, and retiring into private life, amid the plaudits and benedictions of his admiring country. He hoped; he believed he had now taken

a final farewell of public life. His glory seemed to be complete. It appeared to be placed beyond the reach of fortune's hand, and to have had the seal of immortality impressed upon it. But no ; the will of heaven had otherwise decreed. New cares and new duties await him. Again his character is to pass through the furnace of general scrutiny, and his fame once more be launched on the restless ocean of popular opinion.

THE feebleness of our general government every day becoming more and more notorious ; the decay of our commerce ; the decline of manufactures ; the loss of individual and national credit ; the weakness of some States, and the interfering claims of others, threatening to involve us in domestic broils, and exposing us to the attack of any foreign invader ; imperiously demanded the review of our articles of confederation, and the substitution in their place, of an efficient form of government. A convention is accordingly assembled. A plan of national government is framed. It is recommended to the people. It is adopted and put in operation.

AGAIN this great and good MAN, by the unanimous voice of his country is called

to sit at the helm of the new government, and to execute its laws. He accepts the call, but not for himself. Once more he expressly declines receiving any emolument for his services. At the close of the first period, for which he had been elected PRESIDENT, had he consulted only his personal ease or enjoyment he would have quitted his elevated station, and returned to private life. But higher motives influenced *his* mind. Love to his country, and the critical state of her affairs, induced him again at the uninfluenced, unanimous call of his fellow citizens to accept the charge of presiding over the United States. With what fidelity ; with what judgment ; with what firmness and devotion of time and talents, he fulfilled the duties of this high station, no American citizen need be informed.

We have seen him in all his measures, endeavouring to promote or preserve the peace, the welfare, and the happiness of his country. We have seen him filling the various departments of government with men of talents, of integrity, and of private worth. We have seen him sacrificing his personal attachments on the altar of the public good ; and amidst all the obloquy heaped on him by a few fac-

tious spirits, who were more friendly to the views of a foreign power, than to the true interests of their own government; we in no instance see him taking any measure from resentment, but with a magnanimity above all praise, suffering the slanders that were propagated, to die unnoticed.

FIRMNESS of mind was a quality for which he was eminently distinguished. But when was this estimable trait of character more strikingly displayed, than in the conduct he observed towards the first ambassador of Republican France.

When that bold, but ill-advised minister, seconded by a powerful party among ourselves, endeavoured to subject the measures of our government, to the will of his own---when he sought by every artifice to involve us in a war with Great Britain; and when, on discovering the fixed resolution of our government, to preserve a neutrality amid the contentions of the European powers, he threatened to appeal from the decision of the PRESIDENT, to that of the people; what was the conduct of our immortal WASHINGTON? Convinced of the rectitude of his own views, and the soundness of his po-

licy; fearless of the threatened resentment of France, and superior to the clamours of party, we see him stand like a firm and venerable oak, against which the storms of faction beat with fury; but beat in vain.

ANOTHER crisis soon occurred in our affairs, which required the exercise of inflexible firmness, and consummate prudence.

THE first naval power in the world, proud of her own strength, and fortified by an alliance with the governments, that first coalesced to crush the democratic system of France; at the close of the year '93, issued orders, the tendency of which was to ruin the commerce of the United States. Our unarmed merchantmen were seized, wherever met, by British cruisers; conveyed into British ports, and there condemned. Their cargoes without discrimination were confiscated, and our wretched seamen destitute of aid in foreign countries, and stripped of every thing valuable, by the hands of merciless captors, were obliged to borrow, or to beg, the means of returning to their native country. The public mind indignant at

these spoliations on our trade, was prepared at every risk, for defensive war: Our national council too, feeling for the injured dignity, and adopting the sentiments of their constituents, commenced a system of measures that must soon have led to an open rupture with Britain.

ALL eyes were now directed to the CHIEF MAGISTRATE of the Union. In circumstances so embarrassing, what conduct could he pursue that would at once secure the interest, and preserve the honor of the United States. Uninfluenced by resentment, or by party spirit, and consulting only the true honor and interest of his country, he resolves on making one great effort to avert the calamities of war; persuaded that if unsuccessful in the attempt, his fellow citizens would be more united and determined in measures of defence.

In prosecution of this system of pacific policy, we see him with equal judgment and patriotism, selecting as the messenger of peace, a citizen* of known prudence and ability, whose firmness, integrity, and eminent public services, had long endeared

* Mr. Jay, the present governor of New-York.

him to his country, and fixed him in her confidence. A negotiation takes place. Commenced with moderation and good faith, it could not prove abortive. It resulted in a treaty, afterwards ratified by the PRESIDENT, with the approbation of the SENATE, which preserved our national honor, and, what was of more importance than language can describe, saved us from the fearful vortex of a most destructive war.

To prevent the ratification of this treaty, and thus to embroil us in a war with England, every artifice which French intrigue could devise, was practised, but happily without effect. Neither flattery nor abuse could divert the steady, undeviating mind of our enlightened PRESIDENT, from pursuing that line of conduct which became the government of a neutral nation.

At this momentous epoch, the friends of virtue, and the lovers of peace, in Europe, as well as in America, beheld his manly and judicious conduct, and beheld it with mingled astonishment and delight. In their eyes, as in ours, he seemed,

" Like some tall rock that lifts its awful form,
 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm ;
 Tho' round its breast, the rolling clouds be spread,
 Eternal sunshine settles on its head."*

From the elevated place of PRESIDENT of the United States, we see him now voluntarily descend, and once more retire to the humble duties and enjoyments of private life. He retires, full of glory as of years ; and like the setting sun, retains a fuller orb of greatness, than when in the meridian of life and power.

THE hostile language and conduct of France, within the last three years having rendered defensive armaments necessary, by land as well as by sea, once more his country claims his aid, as the Commander of her forces. He assists in organizing the army, and notwithstanding the infirmities of age, and his predilection for private life, stands prepared to take the field, should it be necessary, in defence of his native land. But while discharging the duties of this high command, he is summoned by Heaven to another scene. A mortal disease attacks him. Its progress is rapid. It baffles the exertions of the most eminent professors of medicine. From its first approaches, he fore-

* GOLDSMITH.

sees its fatal issue. He arranges his affairs with composure. He languishes scarce 24 hours ; then with a resignation worthy of his useful life, on the 14th day of the last month, he finished his glorious career on earth, and hastened to that "bourne from which no traveller returns."

RETURN then great and virtuous spirit, to the bosom of thy Father and thy God! While thy frame here moulders in the dust, bedewed with the tears of the worthy and the wise ; thy soul, freed from the shackles that chained it to earth, shall wing its flight to regions of eternal bliss. May the tutelary angels who watch over the interests of this great and growing empire, welcome thee with triumph, to the abodes of the blest. There, amidst friends and companions of thine earthly labours ; amid the sages and patriots of other ages, and other countries---encircled by a Warren and Montgomery ; a Socrates and a Cato ; a Sully and a Hampden ; may'st thou taste those pure enjoyments, which saints and angels only know ; which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard ; neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

To us, who still travel on in this "vale of tears"---to us it belongs to honor his memory, and to imitate his virtues. While his country records his glory, and erects a monument to his fame, American citizens, to remotest ages, will hold his character in remembrance and esteem.

With pride and pleasure they will remember their beloved WASHINGTON, whose fame adds lustre to his age and country; in whose character were combined more exalted virtues, unalloyed by the extremes to which such virtues are most exposed, than in the character of any man of whom we have heard or read. Never did any man better understand the human character, or employ more suitable agents for the accomplishment of his views and plans. In a remarkable degree, he united genius, with judgment; the enterprize of youth, with the caution of age. He was brave, but not rash; fearless of death, but not prodigal of life. He possessed zeal without intemperance, liberality without profusion, and economy without avarice. His piety was rational and sincere, tinged neither with superstition nor hypocrisy. His dignity never wore the garb of haughtiness, nor his modesty that of af-

fection. Moderate in prosperity, he never lost his equanimity in misfortune--- faithful to his friends, he pitied and forgave his enemies. He lived the Hero, the Statesman, and the Sage ; and died the humble, and resigned believer. Behold the man, whom while alive, his country esteemed and loved, and whose memory now, she "delights to honor."

AUTHOR of his being, and Parent of every good ! we bless thee for having raised up so great and good a man, and for having lent his precious life for such a lapse of years to the American people !

I CANNOT close this address in a manner more becoming, or in language so elegant and pathetic, as that used by our national senate in their letter of condolence to the President of the United States.

Adopting their words, every American may with truth, and from the heart say---
 " WITH patriotic pride we review the life of our WASHINGTON, and compare him with those of other countries who have been pre-eminent in fame. Ancient and modern names are diminished before him. Greatness and guilt have too often

been allied, but his fame is whiter than it is brilliant. The destroyers of nations stood abashed at the majesty of his virtue. It reprov'd the intemperance of their ambition and darkened the splendor of victory. The scene is closed, and we are no longer anxious lest misfortune should sully his glory; he has travelled on to the end of his journey and carried with him an increasing weight of honor; he has deposited it safely, where misfortune cannot tarnish it, where malice cannot blast it. Favored of Heaven, he departed without exhibiting the weakness of humanity; magnanimous in death, the darkness of the grave could not obscure his brightness.

Such was the man whom we deplore. Thanks to God, his glory is consummated: WASHINGTON yet lives on earth in his spotless example; his spirit is in heaven.

Let his countrymen consecrate the memory of the heroic General, the patriotic Statesman, and the virtuous Sage. Let them teach their children never to forget that the fruits of his labors, and his example, are their inheritance."

F I N I S